



FP/SO 340 – IMMIGRATION and CULTURAL PLURALISM in PARIS

IES Abroad Paris

DESCRIPTION: The Paris region has the highest concentration of migrant populations in France. In the 19th century and throughout the industrial revolution, these people came from all corners of the country. In the 20th century, they came largely from Eastern and Southern Europe, then later from former French colonies, principally located within the African continent. Today, migrant populations are often fleeing wars or climate disasters.

We will study the history of these different types of migration, then analyze from a sociological perspective how immigration, at different periods, has been constructed as a “problem” in the political and media arenas — which will also lead us to address the history of French nationalism and its transformations.

We will delve into the geography of Paris, which has been shaped in part by these waves of migration, making it one of the most multicultural cities in the world today.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE of INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: NONE.

ADDITIONAL COST: NONE.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION: Each class session features a different text or document (or a press review to be prepared). Students must read this text carefully before class: it will serve as the basis for the presentation that begins each session, followed by a discussion between students and the professor.

At the end of the collection of texts, an appendix contains additional documents (maps, images, links to videos) that serve to deepen the understanding and analysis offered. Students are encouraged to follow the international press and, depending on their language level, the French press.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Participation – 20%
- Mid-semester exam – 20%
- 10-minute discussion in pairs – 20%
- Discussion lead activity – 10%
- Feedback on observations – 10%
- Final exam – 20%

Participation

In addition to attending classes regularly, students must carefully read the document (text, film) that accompanies each session in order to be able to actively participate in the discussion.

Mid-semester exam

Written exam. Students will be asked to answer a question (maximum two pages in Word [font size 12, spacing 1.5] or four handwritten pages) using information from the course, as well as observations made during an ethnographic field session in a Paris neighborhood.



10-minute discussion in pairs

Each class will begin with a discussion based on the preparatory work required for that session (reading a text or watching a film). A pair of students will take on the role of “discussion leaders.” Referring to the questions listed in the syllabus, they will spend about ten minutes presenting their well-argued points of view and opening up avenues for reflection for their classmates. The points of view will be supported by arguments based on the references provided for the session and a minimum of personal research (press reviews, academic articles).

Students will choose the topic on which they will lead a discussion during the course presentation session.

Discussion lead activity

At the end of the ten-minute presentation, the discussion leaders will lead a short discussion with their classmates, having prepared three to five questions related to the discussion topic and the bibliographic elements of the session.

Feedback on observations

Following session 11 (observation in the 20th arrondissement of Paris), students will be required to summarize their observations, referring to the observation guide that was developed collectively during a previous class. This summary will be submitted in writing (in note-taking format) and will serve as the basis for discussion in session 12.

Final exam

Written exam. Essay or document commentary to be written based on knowledge acquired during the course. Students may refer to the documents studied and lectures, as well as handwritten notes taken during the semester.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Learn about the major waves of immigration in France and Paris.
2. Understand the periods of immigration to France in the 19th and 20th centuries.
3. Think critically about the phenomenon of migration in France and how it is discussed.
4. Distinguish between immigration in France and immigration in the United States.
5. Analyze the contemporary immigration situation using historical tools.
6. Learn about certain sociological research tools (particularly ethnographic observation).

CONTENT:

WEEK	Theme	Assignments and Activities
Week 1	(Session 1): Course introduction (Session 2): <i>"Henceforth there is war between us!"</i> the internal migrations that shaped the capital in the 19th and 20th centuries?	Distribution of topics for discussion to be led Reading Bertaux-Wiame, Isabelle. "The Life History Approach to the Study of Internal Migration." <i>Oral History</i>, vol. 7, no. 1, 1979, pp. 26–32. Fuchs, Rachel G., and Leslie Page Moch. "Pregnant, Single, and Far from Home: Migrant Women in Nineteenth-Century Paris." <i>The American Historical Review</i>, vol. 95, no. 4, 1990, pp. 1007–31. Go further (general knowledge): Le Père Goriot, H. de Balzac: http://public-library.uk/ebooks/37/48.pdf Discussion What were the main driving forces of internal migration? What paths did these migrant populations follow?
Week 2	(Session 3) Waves of immigration in France in the 20th century	Before the class: take a walk in a neighborhood of Paris (predefined during Session 2) Reading Holloway, Kerrie, et al. <i>Public Narratives and Attitudes towards Refugees and Other Migrants: France Country Profile</i>. ODI, 2022. Statistics: immigrant populations in France today https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3633212 Discussion: After your exploration, what regional or international markers of migration were you able to identify in the neighborhood you explored?

	(Session 4) Nation and Immigration in France and the United States	Reading Noiriel, Gerard. "Immigration: Amnesia and Memory." <i>French Historical Studies</i>, vol. 19, no. 2, 1995, pp. 367–80. Go further Listen to <i>Ellis Island</i> de Georges Perec: https://www.radiofrance.fr/franceculture/podcasts/samedi-fiction/ellis-island-de-georges-perec-8429914 Discussion What do you see as specific in the relationship with the host country in France and the United States? What “mythologies” are these differences linked to?
Week 3	(Session 5) (De)colonization and postcolonial migration	Reading Etemad, Bouda. “Europe and Migration after Decolonisation”, <i>Journal of European Economic History</i>; Winter 1998; 27, 3; Periodicals Archive Online pg. 457 Go further Stam, Robert, and Ella Shohat. “French Intellectuals and the Postcolonial.” <i>Race in Translation: Culture Wars around the Postcolonial Atlantic</i>, NYU Press, 2012, pp. 244–69. Discussion What migratory movements accompanied the decolonial movement? What migratory movements accompanied the decades following decolonization? Thinking and “unthinking” in the French intellectual world.
	(Session 6) From native to immigrant: the construction of a “political problem”	Reading Glaes, Gillian. “Policing the Post-Colonial Order: Surveillance and the African Immigrant Community in France, 1960-1979.” <i>Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques</i>, vol. 36, no. 2, 2010, pp. 108–26. Go further Blanchard Pascal, Bancel Nicolas, « De l’indigène à l’immigré », Découverte Gallimard, 1998.

		Discussion How was the image of “the immigrant” constructed in France in the decades following decolonization? What differences do you see between this image and its equivalent in the United States?
Week 4	(Session 7) Immigration during the post-war economic boom	Reading Rass, Christoph. “Temporary Labour Migration and State-Run Recruitment of Foreign Workers in Europe, 1919–1975: A New Migration Regime?” <i>International Review of Social History</i> , vol. 57, 2012, pp. 191–224. Go further Bonfils-Guillaud, Cyril. « Étudier des migrations de travail: les archives des personnels étrangers des Hauts-Fourneaux de Chasse pendant les Trente Glorieuses », <i>Les Carnets du LARHRA</i> , 1 2019 Discussion What were the “Glorious Thirty” years, and what role did immigration play in this unique post-war period? Where did the immigrants who came to France at that time come from, and where did they go? How can their experience be characterized?
	(Session 8) The transformation of Paris and its suburbs	Reading Selby, J.A. (2012). “Hardly Paradise”: From Shantytown to Housing Projects. In: <i>Questioning French Secularism. Contemporary Anthropology of Religion</i> . Palgrave Macmillan, New York. Go further Yvan Gastaut, « Les bidonvilles, lieux d’exclusion et de marginalité en France durant les trente glorieuses », <i>Cahiers de la Méditerranée</i> [En ligne], 69 2004 Demain, Demain, Nanterre, bidonville de la folie, Bande Dessinée de Laurent Maffre Steiner Anne. « Les cafés kabyles de Belleville: entre tradition et innovation », <i>Cahiers de sociologie économique et culturelle</i> , n°31, 1999. pp. 35-52

		Discussion What sociological changes took place in Paris and its surrounding areas between the 1960s and 1990s? How do urban landscapes reflect the migration experience in the region during those years?
Week 5	(Session 9) Immigration and habitat	Reading Selby, Jennifer. "When Distance Is Not Geographical: Paris and a Northeastern 'Banlieue.'" <i>Anthropology Now</i> , vol. 1, no. 2, 2009, pp. 88–93. Higbee, Will. "Re-Presenting the Urban Periphery: Maghrebi-French Filmmaking and the 'Banlieue' Film." <i>Cinéaste</i> , vol. 33, no. 1, 2007, pp. 38–43. Go further: Watch: La Haine, M. Kassovitz / L'Esquive, A. Kechiche Wacquant, Loïc. "French working-class banlieues and Black-American ghetto: from conflation to comparison", <i>Qui Parle</i> , vol. 16, no. 2, 2007, pp. 5–38. Discussion What characterizes the geographical and social experience of the northeastern suburbs of Paris? What similarities and differences are there with American "ghettos"? Commentary and comparative analysis of scenes from the films La Haine and L'Esquive: romanticism and aesthetic realism in the suburbs.
	(Session 10) Methodology: ethnographic observation and preparation for exploring a neighborhood	Reading Nelson, Katie, "Doing fieldwork: methods in cultural anthropology", 2020 in Brown Nina, McIlwraith Thomas, Tubelle de Gonzalez Laura, <i>Perspectives: an open introduction to cultural anthropology</i> , second edition, pp. 46–49. Presentation of ethnographic methods Collective preparation of an observation guide

Week 6	(Session 11) Observation in the 20th arrondissement (Session 12) Group feedback on the observation session Belleville, historical and social geography of a Paris neighborhood	X To do Cleaning up and rendering notes taken in the field during observation in the 20th arrondissement. Reading Kaplan, D. H., & Moigne, Y. L. (2019). Multicultural Engagements in Lived Spaces: How Cultural Communities Intersect in Belleville, Paris. <i>City & Community</i>, 18(1), 392-413. https://doi.org/10.1111/cico.12358 (Original work published 2019) Discussion Discuss the ethnographic observations in relation to the article by Kaplan and Le Moigne.
Week 7	(Session 13) Mid-semester exam (Session 14) History of Algerian immigration	Feedback: answer a question by linking elements observed in Belleville with elements from the course and bibliographies. Reading Blanc-Chaléard, Marie-Claude. "Old and New Migrants in France: Italians and Algerians." <i>Paths of Integration: Migrants in Western Europe (1880-2004)</i>, edited by Leo Lucassen et al., Amsterdam University Press, 2006, pp. 46–62. Discussion Why are immigrants still identified as workers today?
Week 8	(Session 15) The "French model" of integration	Reading Barou, J. (2014). Integration of immigrants in France: a historical perspective. <i>Identities</i>, 21(6), 642–657. https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2014.882840

	(Session 16) 1998–2018, France's “Black, Blanc, Beur” national mythology	Discussion What does the concept of “integration” mean in the French context? What are the main discussions surrounding this term today? Reading Thompson, Christopher S. “From <i>Black-Blanc-Beur</i> to <i>Black-Black-Black</i>?: ‘L’Affaire Des Quotas’ and the Shattered ‘Image of 1998’ in Twenty-First-Century France.” <i>French Politics, Culture & Society</i>, vol. 33, no. 1, 2015, pp. 101–21. Go further Etoke, Nathalie. “Black Blanc Beur: Ma France à Moi.” <i>Nouvelles Études Francophones</i>, vol. 24, no. 1, 2009, pp. 157–71. Discussion Tracing the origins of the expression “Black, Blanc, Beur.” How can we talk about “Les Bleus” as a national mythology?
Week 9	(Session 17) Immigrants and descendants of immigrants	Reading Statistical portrait: https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/7344042 Roy, Olivier. “Get French or die trying”, in the New York Times, 09 Nov. 2005 Beaman, Jean. “North African Origins in and of the French Republic.” <i>Citizen Outsider: Children of North African Immigrants in France</i>, 1st ed., University of California Press, 2017, pp. 1–28. Discussion Children of immigrants: social mobility and the glass ceiling (using statistical and qualitative data). Go further Film <i>la Graine et le Mulet</i>, d’A. Kechiche

	(Session 18) Terrorism in France, immigration, Islam	Reading Roy, Olivier. « There are more French muslims working for French security than for Al Qaeda », spring 2015 Britton, J. (2015). Muslims, Racism and Violence after the Paris Attacks. Sociological Research Online, 20(3), 207-212. « Terrorism in France: overview of the French extremist movements in 2024 », CRGN Note Go further Maxwell, Rahsaan, and Erik Bleich. “What Makes Muslims Feel French?” <i>Social Forces</i>, vol. 93, no. 1, 2014, pp. 155–79. Discussion 2015: tragedies and the creation of a “public issue”
Week 10	(Session 19) The migration “crisis”: constructing a narrative (Session 20) Europe as a “fortress”	Reading Fine, Shoshana. <i>ALL AT SEA: EUROPE’S CRISIS OF SOLIDARITY ON MIGRATION</i>. European Council on Foreign Relations, 2019. Discussion How did the idea of a “migration crisis” come about in the European public debate? Reading Taglia Pietra, Alberto. <i>The European Migration Crisis: A Pendulum between the Internal and External Dimensions</i>. Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), 2019. Watch: l’Histoire de Souleymane, de Boris Loujkine Discussion “Europe as a fortress,” on a human scale. Compare TagliaPietra’s text with Loujkine’s film. Commentary on a scene from the film.

Week 11	(Session 21) Meeting with a social/community worker/public library employee/journalist: to be determined based on availability (Session 22) The theory of the “great replacement” in the French media	Preparing questions to lead the discussion Reading: Herold Maik, “Who Believes in the “Great Replacement”? Political Attitudes and Democratic Alienation Among Supporters of Immigration-Related Conspiracy Theories in Europe”, <i>Social Science Quarterly</i>, feb. 2025. Conducting statistical research: the socioeconomic contributions of immigration in France Discussion How did this theory develop, who does it target, and who is it aimed at? What are its main channels of communication?
Week 12	(Session 23) The Transformation of Nationalism (1/2) (Session 24) The Transformation of Nationalism (2/2)	Reading Villard, Florent, and Pascal-Yan Sayegh. “Redefining a (Mono)Cultural Nation: Political Discourse against Multiculturalism in Contemporary France.” <i>Challenging Multiculturalism: European Models of Diversity</i>, edited by Raymond Taras, Edinburgh University Press, 2013, pp. 236–54. Discussion: What are the characteristics of contemporary nationalist discourse in France? Reading Tamir, Yael. Review of <i>The Enigma of Nationalism</i>, by Benedict Anderson, Liah Greenfeld, and Anthony D. Smith. <i>World Politics</i> 47, no. 3 (1995): 418–40. Et / ou Thompson, Willie. “Imagined Communities: Signs and Symbols, Identities and Nations.” <i>Work, Sex and Power: The Forces That Shaped Our History</i>, Pluto Press, 2015, pp. 145–63. Discussion What is an “imagined community” according to Anderson? What connections can you make between this idea and that of a multicultural nation?

Week 13	(Session 25) Conclusion	Submission and feedback on final assignments
Week 14	Final written exam date TBD	Final written exam date TBD Choose a community that immigrated to France, or more specifically to Paris/the Paris region, and describe their history, highlighting the difficulties they encountered (discrimination, racism, work, language learning, etc.) and the strategies their members used to adapt. Your analysis should be based on: 1. At least two bibliographical references (covered during the semester or discovered during your research) 2. Statistical data 3. Observations made during the semester as part of ethnographic and cultural field trips You may refer to the notes you took during the semester.

REQUIRED READING

Barou, J. (2014). Integration of immigrants in France: a historical perspective. *Identities*, 21(6), 642–657. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2014.882840>

Beaman, Jean. “North African Origins in and of the French Republic.” *Citizen Outsider: Children of North African Immigrants in France*, 1st ed., University of California Press, 2017, pp. 1–28.

Bertaux-Wiame, Isabelle. “The Life History Approach to the Study of Internal Migration.” *Oral History*, vol. 7, no. 1, 1979, pp. 26–32.

Blanc-Chaléard, Marie-Claude. “Old and New Migrants in France: Italians and Algerians.” *Paths of Integration: Migrants in Western Europe (1880-2004)*, edited by Leo Lucassen et al., Amsterdam University Press, 2006, pp. 46–62.

Britton, J. (2015). Muslims, Racism and Violence after the Paris Attacks. *Sociological Research Online*, 20(3), 207-212.

Etemad, Bouda. “Europe and Migration after Decolonisation”, *Journal of European Economic History*; Winter 1998; 27, 3; Periodicals Archive Online pg. 457

Fine, Shoshana. *ALL AT SEA: EUROPE’S CRISIS OF SOLIDARITY ON MIGRATION*. European Council on Foreign Relations, 2019.

Fuchs, Rachel G., and Leslie Page Moch. “Pregnant, Single, and Far from Home: Migrant Women in Nineteenth-Century Paris.” *The American Historical Review*, vol. 95, no. 4, 1990, pp. 1007–31.

Glaes, Gillian. "Policing the Post-Colonial Order: Surveillance and the African Immigrant Community in France, 1960-1979." *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques*, vol. 36, no. 2, 2010, pp. 108–26.

Herold Maik, "Who Believes in the "Great Replacement"? Political Attitudes and Democratic Alienation Among Supporters of Immigration-Related Conspiracy Theories in Europe", *Social Science Quarterly*, feb. 2025.

Higbee, Will. "Re-Presenting the Urban Periphery: Maghrebi-French Filmmaking and the 'Banlieue' Film." *Cinéaste*, vol. 33, no. 1, 2007, pp. 38–43.

Holloway, Kerrie, et al. *Public Narratives and Attitudes towards Refugees and Other Migrants: France Country Profile*. ODI, 2022.

Kaplan, D. H., & Moigne, Y. L. (2019). Multicultural Engagements in Lived Spaces: How Cultural Communities Intersect in Belleville, Paris. *City & Community*, 18(1), 392-413. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cico.12358> (Original work published 2019)

Nelson, Katie, "Doing fieldwork: methods in cultural anthropology", 2020 in Brown Nina, McIlwraith Thomas, Tubelle de Gonzalez Laura, *Perspectives: an open introduction to cultural anthropology*, second edition, pp. 46-49.

Noiriel, Gerard. "Immigration: Amnesia and Memory." *French Historical Studies*, vol. 19, no. 2, 1995, pp. 367–80.

Rass, Christoph. "Temporary Labour Migration and State-Run Recruitment of Foreign Workers in Europe, 1919–1975: A New Migration Regime?" *International Review of Social History*, vol. 57, 2012, pp. 191–224.

Roy, Olivier. "Get French or die trying", in the New York Times, 09 Nov. 2005

Roy, Olivier. « There are more French muslims working for French security than for Al Qaeda », spring 205

Selby, J.A. (2012). "Hardly Paradise": From Shantytown to Housing Projects. In: Questioning French Secularism. *Contemporary Anthropology of Religion*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Selby, Jennifer. "When Distance Is Not Geographical: Paris and a Northeastern 'Banlieue.'" *Anthropology Now*, vol. 1, no. 2, 2009, pp. 88–93.

Tagliapietra, Alberto. *The European Migration Crisis: A Pendulum between the Internal and External Dimensions*. Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), 2019.

Tamir, Yael. Review of *The Enigma of Nationalism*, by Benedict Anderson, Liah Greenfeld, and Anthony D. Smith. *World Politics* 47, no. 3 (1995): 418–40.

Thompson, Christopher S. "From *Black-Blanc-Beur* to *Black-Black-Black*?: 'L'Affaire Des Quotas' and the Shattered 'Image of 1998' in Twenty-First-Century France." *French Politics, Culture & Society*, vol. 33, no. 1, 2015, pp. 101–21.

Thompson, Willie. "Imagined Communities: Signs and Symbols, Identities and Nations." *Work, Sex and Power: The Forces That Shaped Our History*, Pluto Press, 2015, pp. 145–63.

Villard, Florent, and Pascal-Yan Sayegh. "Redefining a (Mono)Cultural Nation: Political Discourse against Multiculturalism in Contemporary France." *Challenging Multiculturalism: European Models of Diversity*, edited by Raymond Taras, Edinburgh University Press, 2013, pp. 236–54.



REQUIRED VIEWING

La Haine, Matthieu Kassovitz, 1995

L'Esquive, Abdellatif Kechiche, 2003

L'Histoire de Souleymane, Boris Lojkine, 2024

RECOMMENDED READING / VIEWING: Certaines références non obligatoires sont en français ; compte tenu de leur intérêt, les étudiants sont vivement encouragés à les approcher à l'aide d'un logiciel de traduction ou d'un camarade francophone.

Stam, Robert, and Ella Shohat. "French Intellectuals and the Postcolonial." *Race in Translation: Culture Wars around the Postcolonial Atlantic*, NYU Press, 2012, pp. 244–69.

Blanchard Pascal, Bancel Nicolas, « De l'indigène à l'immigré », Découverte Gallimard, 1998

Etoke, Nathalie. "Black Blanc Beur: Ma France à Moi." *Nouvelles Études Francophones*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2009, pp. 157–71.

Gastaut, Yvan. « Les bidonvilles, lieux d'exclusion et de marginalité en France durant les trente glorieuses », *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* [En ligne], 69 | 2004

Maffre, Laurent. *Demain, Demain, Nanterre, bidonville de la folie* (Bande Dessinée), 2012.

Maxwell, Rahsaan, and Erik Bleich. "What Makes Muslims Feel French?" *Social Forces*, vol. 93, no. 1, 2014, pp. 155–79.

Steiner, Anne. « Les cafés kabyles de Belleville: entre tradition et innovation », *Cahiers de sociologie économique et culturelle*, n°31, 1999. pp. 35-52